



Plenary sitting

B8-0274/2017

24.4.2017

MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION

to wind up the debate on the statement by the Commission

pursuant to Rule 123(2) of the Rules of Procedure

on the situation in Venezuela
(2017/2651(RSP))

Francisco Assis, Ramón Jáuregui Atondo, Elena Valenciano
on behalf of the S&D Group

**European Parliament resolution on the situation in Venezuela
(2017/2651(RSP))**

The European Parliament,

- having regard to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights of 1948,
- having regard to the Inter-American Democratic Charter, adopted on 11 September 2001,
- having regard to the Constitution of Venezuela, and in particular Articles 72 and 233 thereof,
- having regard to its previous resolutions on the situation in Venezuela, in particular those of 27 February 2014 on the situation in Venezuela¹, of 18 December 2014 on the persecution of the democratic opposition in Venezuela², of 12 March 2015 on the situation in Venezuela³, and of 8 of June 2016 on the situation in Venezuela⁴,
- having regard to the statement of 5 January 2016 by the European External Action Service (EEAS) Spokesperson on the inauguration of the new National Assembly of Venezuela,
- having regard to the Mercosur Communiqué of 2 December 2016 notifying Venezuela's suspension,
- having regard to the statement of 30 March 2017 by the EEAS Spokesperson on the recent developments in Venezuela,
- having regard to the communication of 10 February 2017 of the Organisation of the Civil Society concerning the recent actions by the National Electoral Council (CNE),
- having regard to the report of 14 March 2017 from the Secretary-General of the Organisation of American States (OAS), Luis Almagro, on the situation in Venezuela,
- having regard to the Acceso a la Justicia report of July 2016 entitled 'Informe sobre el cumplimiento de los requisitos exigidos por parte de los magistrados del Tribunal Supremo de Justicia',
- having regard to the joint statement of 12 November 2016 entitled 'Convivir en Paz' adopted by the Venezuelan Government and the opposition,
- having regard to the Declaration of 1 April 2017 of Mercosur member states on the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela,

¹ Texts adopted, P7_TA(2014)0176.

² Texts adopted, P8_TA(2014)0106.

³ Texts adopted, P8_TA(2015)0080.

⁴ Texts adopted, P8_TA(2016)0269.

- having regard to the statement by Parliamentarians for Global Action (PGA) of 21 March 2017 on the situation in Venezuela,
 - having regard to the Declaration of 31 March 2017 of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights entitled ‘Keeping open democratic spaces is essential to ensure that human rights are protected’,
 - having regard to the joint statement of 31 March 2017 by a majority of the members of the Union of South American Nations (Unasur) condemning the Venezuelan Supreme Court’s decision to assume legislative powers,
 - having regard to the OAS statement of 23 March 2017 by 14 of its members states on Venezuela,
 - having regard to the OAS Permanent Council’s resolution of 3 April 2017 on the recent events in Venezuela,
 - having regard to the statement of 10 April 2017 by the EEAS Spokesperson,
 - having regard to Rule 123(2) of its Rules of Procedure,
- A. whereas, on April 6 2017, the Comptroller General of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela sanctioned Henrique Capriles Radonski, the state governor of Miranda and twice presidential candidate, barring him from public office for 15 years;
 - B. whereas Supreme Court decisions 155 and 156 of 29 March 2017 waived parliamentary immunity for three opposition MPs and transferred the powers of the National Assembly to the Constitutional Chamber of the Supreme Court; whereas the State Attorney General expressed her concern at the ‘breach of constitutional order’ arising from these decisions; whereas the Supreme Court issued a new decision on 1 April restoring powers to the National Assembly;
 - C. whereas on 3 April 2017, 17 out of 21 countries from the OAS Permanent Council adopted a resolution on Venezuela in which they outlined their grave concern regarding ‘...the unconstitutional alteration of the democratic order in the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela and [voiced] their continuous support for dialogue and negotiations that could lead to a peaceful restoration of the democratic order’;
 - D. whereas the failure to call regional elections before 16 December 2016, and suspending the collection of signatures before meeting the 20 % threshold required to call a referendum to revoke the presidential mandate, constitute an extremely serious setback in terms of the political rights of the Venezuelan people, and are damaging to the country’s electoral integrity;
 - E. whereas dialogue between the Venezuelan Government and the opposition sponsored by Unasur began in the first half of 2016, with the participation of three former presidents; whereas the dialogue is still ongoing but has not given any concrete results yet; whereas in the last couple of days some countries in the region expressed their desire to facilitate the mediation process in Venezuela in the hope of making a possible breakthrough;

- F. whereas the government has announced the expansion of its civilian militia to 500 000 by arming them; whereas the UN has condemned the initiative arguing that it would only exacerbate the tensions in the country;
- G. whereas migration on a massive scale is taking place with Venezuelans fleeing the country in large numbers;
1. Reiterates its grave concern at the seriously deteriorating situation as regards democracy, human rights and the socio-economic situation in Venezuela, characterised by an increasingly unstable political and social climate;
 2. Recalls that the separation of powers and no interference between equally legitimate powers is an essential principle of democratic states and the rule of law;
 3. Takes note that the Supreme Court has issued two decisions to revoke its initial ruling to transfer the powers of the National Assembly to the Constitutional Chamber of the Supreme Court and to waive members' parliamentary immunity;
 4. Urges both the executive and legislative powers to solve, jointly and immediately, and in accordance with their obligations, the shortcomings in relation to the human rights situation, such as access to food and health services; asks for moderation in their actions and that the political will be found to relaunch the dialogue as the only way forward to finding peaceful and negotiated solution to the current crisis;
 5. Notes that the solution to the institutional and political problems that Venezuela is experiencing should come from an agreement between the government and opposition; stresses that this should be done by the Venezuelans' legitimate representatives;
 6. Calls on the international community and in particular the Vice-President of the Commission / High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy (VP/HR) to promote this dialogue and to mediate between the two Venezuelan political and institutional representations in order to achieve an agreement, which must address the following:
 - a. The release of the political representatives jailed for their political convictions or as a result of the problems with law and order that have occurred in recent years in this country.
 - b. An electoral calendar for the local and gubernatorial elections scheduled to have taken place in 2016, and a commitment to holding presidential elections where no person would be prevented or incapacitated from becoming a candidate or from carrying out their campaign in total freedom or be deprived of equal rights.
 - c. Full respect for the National Assembly's democratic competences and a guarantee that its legitimate functions are not called into question, limited or breached;
 7. Calls on the governments of Latin America and in particular on international organisations in the region to promote this international mediation and to exercise a leading role in advocating dialogue and a peaceful and democratic solution to the conflict in Venezuela; calls on the VP/HR to promote such mediation in collaboration

with the international community;

8. Calls on the VP/HR, in the event that this mediation fails due to a lack of political will on the part of the Government of Venezuela or because it commits freedom-repressing acts or violates the principle of the separation of powers, the principle of democracy or the rule of law, to actively explore other measures that could be taken by the EU to achieve democratic stability and respect for constitutional values in Venezuela;
9. Requests that the authorities put an end to the violent repression of demonstrators and to withhold guns from civilians supporters of any political group and specifically from those acting in the name of the government; recalls its plea to the government to respect and guarantee the constitutional right to peaceful demonstrations; calls likewise on the opposition leaders to exercise their powers with responsibility; calls on the Venezuelan authorities to guarantee security and the free exercise of rights for all citizens in the framework of the Venezuelan Constitution, in particular human rights defenders, journalists, political activists and members of independent non-governmental organisations;
10. Is concerned about the information received regarding the expansion of armed civilian militias by the Venezuelan Government; urges the government not to proceed any further in this manner and to commit to not doing so in the future, as such action will create an extremely violent and dangerous precedent;
11. Calls on the European governments to address with the greatest generosity and speed the situation regarding the applications for EU residency by citizens of Venezuela;
12. Reiterates its request for a European Parliament delegation to be sent to Venezuela and to hold a dialogue with all sectors involved in the conflict as soon as possible;
13. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council, the Commission, the Vice-President of the Commission / High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, the Government and National Assembly of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, the Euro-Latin American Parliamentary Assembly and the Secretary-General of the Organisation of American States.